



**Business Branding Project  
Request for Proposal  
Frequent Asked Questions**

1. How will HTA evaluate the project in the test market once it is completed?

We recognize the difficulty in creating evaluation criteria. We would like the offerors to suggest a reasonable evaluation/accountability program within the workplan. Since this is a branding exercise, the evaluation would ideally reflect any changes in attitude about Hawai'i's business brand image.

2. Do you have any information about what other entities, like the Department of Business, Economic Development & Tourism (DBEDT), are looking for in terms of business branding?

HTA met with the Hawai'i Convention Center, Hawai'i Visitors & Convention Bureau, island economic development boards, the Chamber of Commerce, DBEDT, University of Hawaii, High Tech Development Corporation (HTDC), the Campbell Estate and others. Each of them has a business marketing or sales program; none of them, however, has fielded a business branding program. HTA hopes to create a brand umbrella that can benefit all of these organizations in support of their tactical programs. For example, the Hawaii Visitors and Convention Bureau's (HVCB) Corporate Meetings and Incentives department (CMI) and SMG's (Hawaii Convention Center's operator and manager) convention sales will ideally find it easier to close sales if the branding program has established a positive business brand for the state.

3. Is there are call to action?

This is a branding campaign and, as such, a call to action is less of a point of focus than a message that supports a positive attitude about Hawai'i's business image. However, the branding message can be run in conjunction with marketing messages from other organizations (HVCB, SMG, HTDC, DBEDT, etc.) that could have their own call to action. The issue of a call to action, however, is open and HTA would like to see offerors' thoughts on this.

4. Will there be oral presentations?

If more information is required to make a decision than is contained in the written proposal, the HTA may ask offerors for oral presentations.

5. Was there a sole source for this project in the past?

No, this is a new project and has never been done before.

6. Do you see this going beyond the U.S. to Asia?

Yes. The SMG has been successful in building Japanese business. Ultimately, HTA wants to build business branding in all markets. However, with only \$400,000, HTA will begin by establishing a marketing message in a limited region (or industry segment) in the domestic market.

7. I read in the paper about a San Diego mission. What happened?

DBEDT did send a delegation to San Diego which was related to a specific industry conference. The purpose of the business branding project is to develop a positive brand message that can support programs such as the San Diego mission. Hawaii is missing a branding message and one is needed in order to enable activities such as the San Diego mission to be more productive.

8. The RFP states that audited financials for the last three years are required. Our company's financials have not been audited. Could you please confirm that we can just submit the financials for the last three years and the fact that they are not audited will not pose a problem?

The RFP states that "offeror shall provide an audited financial statement for the past THREE (3) years, evidence of creditworthiness **or** other financial indicators providing evidence supporting the ability to carry out the proposed program." As such, you can submit your company's financials for the past three years if they support the fact that your company is well-established and financially stable. The HTA wants to ensure that your company is able to carry out the project.

9. Will there be a problem with the fact that we have only been open for 7 months? We have solid financial records since our conception and have a large CPA firm that can give you anything you might need to that effect.

We do not believe that a proposal being submitted by your 7 month old agency will be rejected as being non-responsive to the RFP. However, it may be a factor when evaluating your proposal under the evaluation criteria provided in the RFP. The RFP requires offerors to provide financial indicators providing evidence supporting the ability to carry out the proposed program. The evidence may include audited financial statement for the past 3 years among other forms of evidence supporting the ability of an offeror to carry out the proposed business branding program. You may be responsive to the RFP by submitting any financial indicators which will demonstrate that your 7 month old agency has the financial ability to carry out the business branding program described in the work plan submitted in your proposal. The HTA will consider your financial indicators and evaluate your financial strength among many other factors when it evaluates your proposal under the evaluation criteria provided in the RFP.

10. With proper justification, is there any flexibility with regard to lengthening the time line on this program in order to achieve results, with the guarantee that the budget will not be affected

No, there is no flexibility. This project is funded as part of the fiscal year 2004 HTA budget and the project must be completed before June 30, 2004.

11. Are there mechanisms currently in place or under consideration to pull together the various funding entities and stakeholders for this program to build consensus for the branding theme line?

HTA is in the process of developing the mechanisms. We welcome your suggestions in the proposal.

12. Is it understood by all stakeholders above that the focus of this branding exercise is to affect meetings business and will not necessarily work for general business investment purposes?

The HTA's mission is to increase visitor expenditures in Hawai'i – and one important component of that mission is to increase the proportion of business visitors as a part of the visitor mix. So, this branding campaign needs to support Hawai'i's business image in order to facilitate HVCB and SMG efforts to sell meetings. However, other business organizations in the state can be supported by the same positive business brand that we seek to establish and, therefore, we expect that a successful campaign will support general business activity for Hawai'i. We're looking to change the current image of Hawaii and develop Hawaii as a productive place to do business, which includes the meetings and convention business, in addition to other business purposes.